

Process of the Mini Focus Groups

A total of 27 mini focus groups were held, involving 112 participants. Each group included three to five people. All groups were moderated by The Newman Group, Ltd. Participants were encouraged to talk freely and initiate conversations with each other, as well as to respond to the questions posed by the moderator. Each group met for between 90 and 120 minutes. Verbatim written transcripts, videotapes, and summaries were made of all sessions for the express purpose of writing the findings report.

Table 3-1: Number of Mini Focus Groups for Each City and Product Category			
Area	Ft. Lauderdale	Dallas	Chicago
Indoor Insecticides	3	3	3
Outdoor Pesticides	3	3	3
Household Cleaners	3	3	3

“Mock labels” were created for the focus groups, in order to show representative label features and concepts to guide and spark discussion (see Appendices 3-3 — 3-6). These mock labels gave consumers an opportunity to personally examine many variations of product label information and provide immediate feedback. None of these mock labels existed for use on any existing products. They were produced for the mini focus groups by manufacturers of the product categories being discussed. The mock labels underwent some changes throughout the course of the groups, as people made suggestions or expressed opinions related to the graphical representation or signal words and the use of boxes.

During each session, after some preliminary information on labeling was obtained, the moderator asked participants to refer to certain mock labels from their packet to coincide with a specific section of the discussion. By the end of the discussion, participants had viewed all of the mock labels for their product category. The order in which the different sections of labels were discussed was intentionally varied from group to group, so as not to encourage any particular “position bias.” (For example, if the Ingredients section was discussed first in one group, it was discussed second in another group.) The participants were told that at any time they could say they preferred the “Control Label,” which represented the typical way labels in the category were currently being designed. Also, during some of the later sessions, participants were asked to evaluate certain precautionary phrases that appear on labels (see Appendix 3-8).

At the end of each session, a short amount of time was devoted to obtaining participants’ input on various draft logos (see Appendix 3-7) for a proposed “Read the Label *FIRST!*” Consumer Education Campaign. (Chapter 6 discusses the CLI Consumer Education Campaign in more detail.)

The topics that follow discuss the reactions of participants in the mini focus groups to different types of label information, including Signal Words, Directions for Use, and Precautionary Language. The participants also discussed alternative formats for label information. A list of the mock labels used for each topic appears at the end of that section. The actual mock labels that participants discussed can be found in Appendices 3-3 — 3-6. (Appendix 3-3=mock labels shown for signal words; Appendix 3-4=mock labels for outdoor pesticides; Appendix 3-5=mock labels for household cleaners; Appendix 3-6=mock labels for indoor insecticides.)